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L'an mil et la paix de Dieu: La France chrétienne et féodale, 980-1060 by Dominique Barthélemy

Review by: Frederick S. Paxton

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and he has invented a *diagramma evolutivo*, replacing the static *stemma codicum*, to represent visually the dynamic relationships between the chief witnesses.

Davide Canfora's edition of Poggio's *De infelicitate principum* is the second volume in a welcome new series, the Edizione Nazionale dei Testi Umanistici, published in cooperation with Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura and directed by Scevola Mariotti. Its scope is to publish critical editions of Latin works by Italian humanists. The present text, by the famous Tuscan humanist and book hunter Poggio Bracciolini (1380–1459), illustrates the troubled relationship between learning and power perceived by some early humanists and the ever-present pull of Epicurean retirement and the contemplative life; it is a useful corrective to the tendency to interpret early quattrocento humanism simplistically as an ideology of republicanism and the active life of politics. From a textual point of view, the work illustrates the difficulty or impossibility of constructing a traditional stemma for popular texts written in the decades just before the invention of printing, when book production had already begun to be organized on a large scale. As Canfora shows, the textual tradition consists of some 60 witnesses, most of them written within about thirty years of each other; analysis of the three main families of witnesses demonstrates the ubiquity of contamination and the very real possibility of authorial interventions even in manuscripts that on recensionary principles ought to be remote from the (lost) archetype. The situation illustrates the importance of external evidence (paleographical and codicological) as well as *divinatio* based on a firm sense of authorial and coeval usage in establishing Renaissance texts. Canfora, it should be said, negotiates all these difficulties with care and good sense and establishes a convincing, impeccable text.

The third text under review, Leonardo Bruni's *Laudatio Florentine urbis* (1404), is the most famous of the three among modern scholars, though it was the least widely circulated of the three during the Renaissance itself. The oration has become the most canonical text in the tradition of "civic humanism" thanks to the influence of Hans Baron's *Crisis of the Early Italian Renaissance* (1955, rev. ed. 1966). It has been edited in whole or in part six times since the late nineteenth century. None of these editions, however, made use of more than a handful of the 43 surviving witnesses or attempted to determine their interrelationships. Stefano Baldassarri, however, has now given us a definitive critical edition which surveys the manuscript tradition as a whole and carefully classifies the witnesses. As the tradition is smaller, extends over eight decades, and does not reveal signs of textual evolution, Baldassarri has been able to establish a traditional stemma. An important finding, indeed, is Baldassarri's convincing proof that the *Laudatio* did not undergo further revision when it was recirculated during the 1430s, as has sometimes been alleged. His edition also provides a more complete and reliable identification of the sources than that offered by previous editions as well as some new details concerning the reception of the work. It is a welcome addition to the growing array of modern editions of Bruni's works, which includes Baldassarri's own earlier edition of the *Dialogi* (Olschki, 1994), Ernesto Berti's edition of Plato's *Crito* in Bruni's two versions (Olschki, 1983), the *Orationes Homeri* edited by Peter Thiermann (Brill, 1993), and Susanne Daub's superb edition and study of the *Oratio in funere Nanni Strozze* (Teubner, 1996).

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DOMINIQUE BARTHÉLEMY, *L'an mil et la paix de Dieu: La France chrétienne et féodale, 980–1060*. Paris: Fayard, 1999. Paper. Pp. 637; maps and genealogical tables. F 170.

According to Dominique Barthélemy, when it comes to understanding the year 1000 or the Peace of God, French historiography has yet to emerge from the shadow of Jules Michelet. Michelet regarded the year 1000 as the nadir of French civilization, a barbaric time

when the populace was terrorized by feudal warriors and terrified of the coming millennium. The Peace of God signaled the birth of a new age. Having survived the threat of apocalypse, churchmen breathed a sigh of relief and set out with renewed purpose to create a Christian society, curbing the violence of the warriors with the sanctions of the Peace. Too many scholars continue to see things that way. In fact, some go further. Seduced by Marxism and the illusions of 1968, they see the year 1000 as a time of revolution: not by the church and people against the feudal aristocracy, as Michelet and other nineteenth-century historians believed, but by a new class of castle-based warlords against the king and all public authority. Amid constant warfare, the castellans usurped the power of the ban and subjected the free peasantry to serfdom. Since there was no public order, the church had no choice but to take over the role of keeping the peace.

They are all mistaken. A sort of feudal revolution did occur in the 880s, when the west Frankish kings became territorial lords, more or less like their dukes and counts, but since then a basically stable post-Carolingian order had prevailed. No one showed any concern over or even consciousness of the millennium. A Robertian rather than a Carolingian was king, but that had happened before. The Peace of God—not one movement but a series of territorial movements linked by form and methods—was an innovation in peacemaking, but not a force for or against revolution. Bishops, clerics, and monks did not oppose warfare or feudal lordship, just violence against churches and their own lands and people. They worked to extend their jurisdiction over as much of the social terrain as possible, but they were essentially conformists, with little real desire to reform society, and none at all to overturn it.

Barthélemy is not the first scholar to note the effects of ideology on nineteenth-century studies of the Peace, or even on more recent work, so it is ironic this book should be the most recent example of the phenomenon. His repeated insistence that he has no love of polemic fails to convince. Is there really any point in worrying today about Michelet's Christian romanticism or the "populist preoccupations" of nineteenth-century Catholicism? Who argues such things? And what about "the terrors of the year 1000"? Barthélemy should not have had to read Richard Landes's recent statement in the pages of this journal (*Speculum* 75) to know that scholars investigating the range of meanings of the millennium have left behind Michelet's model of fear and relief for the more interesting notions of hope and disappointment: hope that, during the millennial anniversary of Christ's life on earth, a truly Christian society would emerge, peaceful and penitent, and worthy of the return of Christ; disappointment that, once again, universal peace and justice did not materialize. As for Marxism, except in the most extreme cases, the Marxist tendencies of the historians Barthélemy disagrees with amount to little more than widening the scope of analysis to include social categories beyond secular and ecclesiastical elites.

Barthélemy's neoconservatism has a more deleterious effect on his writing. The repetitive and tendentious accusations of Marxism directed toward Georges Duby and his "school" are worrisome. Moreover, his method too often limits the investigation to princes—and princes of the church. Barthélemy has a lot to say about them, much of it of real interest, but his minimalist interpretation of their motives and actions ignores the plentiful evidence that the Peace, and the year 1000, meant many things to many different people.

Barthélemy devotes the first three of seven chapters almost entirely to deconstructing the picture of the period as one of dramatic or revolutionary change. The Peace was a late product of the Carolingian reform, but not a response to any fundamental alteration in the social, religious, or political landscape. Raoul Glaber did set the Peace against the background of the millennial anniversary of Christ's life on earth, but he understood that anniversary in terms of a Mosaic jubilee, not the Book of Revelation. In spite of sporadic violence against Jews, relations with their Christian neighbors remained essentially peaceful. Hugh Capet's ascension was, like Pepin the Short's, simply an adjustment or "clarifi-

cation” within the ruling aristocracy, to allow the man with the real power to occupy the throne. As king, Hugh behaved as kings had since the late ninth century, and so did the princes. The Peace of God is a sign of the stability of their regime, not its weakness, and of the ability of church and secular leaders to provide new judicial forms for changing times.

The last four chapters follow the history of the Peace from its beginnings in Aquitaine and Auvergne to its eventual spread, via the Truce of God, to most of the French “hexagon.” In an interesting turn, Barthélemy argues that the Truce, with its sacralization of time, emphasis on penitence, and purely episcopal jurisdiction, was actually more “of God” than the Peace. For the most part, though, the argument is reductive, as before. The peace councils, their decrees and oaths, even the presence of relics of the saints are everywhere fitted into prevailing methods of negotiating feuds and maintaining seigneurial authority. “Real change” occurred in the ninth century, and would again in the twelfth, but nothing fundamental happened in the tenth and the eleventh.

Barthélemy shines a brilliant light on certain aspects of the Peace of God, revealing clearly the ways in which it expressed or supported the goals of conservative churchmen hoping to maintain or increase their hold on the vast lands entrusted to them. His focus does not extend far enough, however, to convince me that the Peace had nothing to do with the year 1000. Were all churchmen so conservative? Barthélemy paints a fine picture of monastic reform in chapter 1 but never returns to the subject. Did the reform have nothing to do with the millennium? And what about the expressions of heresy that appear in the sources from that time? Barthélemy discusses the heretics of Orléans in chapter 2 but only to say that they did not prefigure Berengar of Tours. Otherwise, heretical dissent, popular or otherwise, plays no role in his story. He notes the massive influx of gifts to the church around the year 1000, and the way the disinherited fought back, but not how such things might have expressed support of or resistance to prevailing religious ideas. He admits that crowds of ordinary men and women were present at peace councils, accepting, for example, Ademar of Chabannes’s account of a near riot by people suffering from ergotism that forced a bishop to perform a ritual “clamor” against St. Martial (pp. 364–65). But he sees no reason to think that ordinary people had thoughts of their own about the meaning of peace councils. Focusing on politics alone is illuminating, but it can also obscure. This is evident even in Thomas Head’s recent essay on the Peace in this journal (*Speculum* 74), in which restricting the analysis to political and military events fails to account for the evidence presented of the religious motivations of people like William IV of Aquitaine and his wife Emma. Did feudal lords support monastic reform and seek monastic profession “ad succurrendum” for political reasons alone? Did monks offer them these things only to assure control over their own seigneuries? Might not some, at least, have acted out of a desire to prepare for the millennium of peace and justice, or the belief that it had arrived? Dominique Barthélemy knows the answers to such questions, but I am not so sure.

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MARY ELIZABETH BASILE, JANE FAIR BESTOR, DANIEL R. COQUILLETTE, and CHARLES DONAHUE, JR., eds. and trans., *“Lex mercatoria” and Legal Pluralism: A Late Thirteenth-Century Treatise and Its Afterlife*. Cambridge, Mass.: Ames Foundation, 1998. Pp. 213 and 118 (nos. 1–42 repeated) plus 4 black-and-white plates; tables and diagrams. Distributed by William S. Hein & Co., Inc., 1285 Main St., Buffalo, NY 14209-1987.

This volume prints and translates a small manuscript, written toward the close of the thirteenth century, called *Lex mercatoria*. It is found in the so-called Little Red Book of